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Guide

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ECUMENISM AND CONVERSION WORK

Gregory Baum, O.S.A.

THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE ON GRACE

P. De Letter

61165
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IT SEEMS TO ME

Some Ground Rules

It is obvious that in the years ahead Catholics will be increasingly engaged in applying Christian principles to the solution of problems that confront Christ's Church in her mission to the world of our day. How shall we avoid both the shoals of imprudent action and the quagmires of helpless inaction?

Karl Rahner recently wrote on the norms which should guide Christians in discussions on matters that are debatable. "The principle laid down for action in the Church states that each one within the Church may follow his spirit so long as it is not certain that he is led by a false spirit; that therefore, his orthodoxy, his liberty, and his good will be presumed until valid proof to the contrary be presented, and not vice versa.

"It is true," continues this leading theologian, "that the judgment as to whether such a proof is given in a particular case belongs to authority and not to the person who is judged; but authority has a sacred duty, for which it may render an account on the day of judgment, to test with humility and self-criticism, whether there really exists such proof, or whether its judgment is precipitate, self-willed and measured only by the yardstick of its own concepts and inclination.

"Patience, tolerance and indulgence towards another so long as his activity is not clearly proved wrong (and not the opposite attitude of forbidding every initiative until its rectitude has been formally approved—with the burden of proof on the subject) are specifically ecclesiastical virtues which spring from the very essence of the Church—the Church is not a totalitarian system."

The liberty of the sons of God is just as much a part of the Christian heritage as the obedience of faith. Where both are in balance the Church is able to bless the world; where one or another is lacking, the Church is hampered in her mission.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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Ecumenism and Conversion Work

Gregory Baum, O.S.A.

In this chapter we defend the view that both ecumenism and the apostolate of conversions are legitimate in the Catholic Church, and that in this we do not contradict the ideals of the World Council of Churches. Since ecumenism is fairly new in the Catholic Church, many Catholics and non-Catholics believe that convert-making corresponds to a deeper desire of the Church. Many feel that ecumenism is a concession of the Church, seeing that other Christians will not be converted, or that it is a roundabout way of converting others while they are not watching.

It must be observed, however, that the Catholic Church, when faced with bodies of separated Christians, has always preferred to deal with the problem collectively. This is most obvious in regard to the separated Eastern Churches, where Rome has never permitted any kind of conversion work. The positive acts of the Holy See have always been negotiations with the patriarchs and bishops of the Eastern Churches in the hope of preparing an ecclesiastical reconciliation. In certain areas where Orthodox and Catholic Christians mingled, or where Orthodox immigrants were isolated from their own Churches, Catholics may have attempted to draw them into their own Church. Without necessarily approving the methods that have been used in these cases, the undertaking seems to me quite legitimate. Many Orthodox Christians, isolated from their Churches either by distance or by the new culture they acquired, were in need of the support of brethren and the sacramental worship of the Church. It would be most unfortunate to see them lose their ancient Christian heritage by joining a new Protestant group, and hence to point out to them the closeness of Catholicism to their own religious tradition is surely a

holy undertaking which is not disloyal to the larger ecumenical quest between the Churches.

Even in regard to Protestants, the first attempt of the Catholic Church to overcome the unholy cleavage was directed to Protestants collectively, not through the conversion of individuals. Though we are not proud to recall the past, we must remember that it was mainly by political power and advantageous treaties that the Roman Church sought to regain many of the territories which had fallen away. This was certainly no ecumenical movement, but it does show that the Catholic Church realized that the tremendous evil of separation could never be healed by the conversion of individuals. If there is a solution, it must affect groups of peoples, whole Churches, cultural areas, Christian communities.

Even today this seems to me the only sound position. However important the apostolate of conversions may be in certain situations, it is not the Church's response to the divided state of Christianity. Conversion work by itself bypasses the real problems of Christian disunity, the purification of the dissident Christian traditions, and the transformation of the Church herself toward greater catholicity.

On the other hand, we admit that the ecumenical movement we have described in these pages is not equally important in all areas where Catholics and Protestants live together. One might propose the principle that the closer a Christian Church is to the fullness of the Catholic tradition, the more

From a chapter in *Progress and Perspectives* by special arrangement with the publisher Sheed and Ward, New York. This volume is composed of material employed by Father Baum in his lectures and conferences. No priest interested in Ecumenism and the Apostolate for Conversions should fail to read this remarkable book.

important is ecumenical work and the less significant the work for individual conversions; and, conversely, that the further a Christian group is from this Catholic fullness, the less significant is ecumenism and the more important the apostolate for individual souls. This law is actually verified by the attitude of the Catholic Church in various areas of the world. In regard to the Eastern Churches, as we have mentioned, the only legitimate method is that of ecumenism.

In regard to Protestant Christians, Catholic ecumenism is fully developed in the countries of Europe where the Catholic Church faces a fairly homogeneous community of Protestants committed to a traditional creed, a liturgy, and a common theological tradition. It is not surprising, therefore, that in English-speaking countries Catholic ecumenism has not had the same evolution; here the Catholic Church faces a great variety of Protestant traditions, many of them quite distant from traditional Christianity. The reason why Catholics in these countries have remained so little impressed by ecumenism and why they have sometimes even resented it, lies, in part, in the particular kind of Protestantism which they encounter. The radical reaction against liberalism which a generation ago transformed the Protestantism of continental Europe did not achieve the same effect in England and North America. Since liberalism as well as sectarianism abounds in the English-speaking Christian world, many Catholics have not been sensitive to the authentic Christian forces among their Protestant neighbors.

Especially in North America there are vast numbers of men who call themselves Christian and Protestant without any truly religious commitment to the God of Jesus Christ. They do not know the teaching of Scriptures, and they do not believe in the central message of the Gospel: the Incarnation and the Trinity. For many of them God is a friendly being full of benevolence for nice people; he also has a predilection for democracy. The gospel is a charter of the good neighbor policy and economic freedom. These people are usually loyal to their Churches. In fact, going to church on Sundays has become a public pledge that one respects the domesticated values of the benevolent God in favor of democratic ideals and free enterprise. These "Protes-

tants" have no other connection with the authentic Protestantism of the Reformation than the weekly offering they make to their Churches.

Faced with people of this kind, the Catholic Church has only one answer: To give witness to the Catholic gospel in order that those whom God chooses may find the new life of Christ in the Church of his founding. While it is imperative that the Catholic community become more imbued with the ecumenical spirit—for the sake of its own inner renewal—it is also indispensable that the Church continue her effort to convert individuals. There need be no conflict here. Ecumenism makes the Church more truly Catholic, and conversion work deals with individual souls whose religious convictions are only vaguely related to traditional Christianity.

High Ethical Code

We have mentioned that the apostolate for conversions is reconcilable with ecumenism and Christian charity only when it is subject to a high ethical code. We must discuss this topic in greater detail.

We support the distinction introduced by the World Council of Churches between authentic Christian witness and the corruption of this witness, though we cannot agree with the rigid terms of the distinction. There is no witness which is perfectly pure! As long as we are in this world, Christian missionary activity will always be influenced by a certain number of selfish desires. It would be hypocritical to reject altogether the value of Christian witness whenever we detect in it some measure of self-seeking. The imperfect motive weakens but does not invalidate the good deed. It is true that Christian witness depends much more than any other activity on the purity of intention, since the effect of missionary witness is completely dependent on God's mercy; yet, even here, the partial egotism involved in it does not entirely corrupt the witness.

The report of the World Council of Churches mentions four distinct faults by which the movement of evangelization deteriorates and becomes proselytism. The first fault mentioned is the use of bribes, intimidations, and force in the propagation of the gospel. These means are obviously wrong, and even though we have often used them in the past, everyone agrees that they

are reprehensible and against the gospel. The people who made use of such means have usually done so with a bad conscience, for they knew that God cannot be served by evil ways.

The second fault is the preference of particular ecclesiastical advantages to the good of the people or the hidden action of Jesus Christ. This is a more subtle temptation, and we may fall into it unawares. There are situations where, for the sake of financial support for schools or some other ecclesiastical benefit, the bishops of a country favor a political party or a particular politician whose ideals are at variance with social justice or Christian freedom. Catholic political notions do not exclude a state which protects and supports the Church, but this is precisely the reason why we are so often tempted to exploit a political situation in an unfair way against those who disagree with us spiritually. If the propagation of faith goes hand in hand with such methods, we sin and our Christian witness is greatly weakened.

The third fault mentioned in the report is the giving of false witness in regard to other Churches. In order to protect our own people against the influence of others, we are tempted to paint their beliefs and practices in dark colors, to misrepresent their teachings, and to slander their good intentions. To increase the persuasive power of our arguments for the Catholic Church, we may be tempted to belittle or even deny the authentic Christian elements and sacramental realities in dissident religious groups. Following such a method, we might convert dissident Christians to the Catholic Church by neglecting, instead of perfecting, their own Christian heritage; this would be reprehensible proselytism. A particularly subtle way of being unfair would be to draw a comparison between the *ideal* state of the Catholic Church and the *actual* achievements of other Christian bodies. We might describe the Church's unity, her catholicity and sanctity in the normative terms of our faith, and then compare these with the actual situation found in other Churches, including their shortcomings and faulty developments. This is obviously unjust. As Father Dumont has said so well, when we try to understand Protestant Christians, we must not only look at what they are but also at what they want to be.

A fourth fault which may weaken authen-

tic Christian witness is to let group egotism, instead of concern for souls, dominate our missionary zeal. We may be tempted to convert others for our own glory rather than for the good of their souls. Our personal selfishness is easily projected and extended to the group with which we identify ourselves. Corporate self-seeking is a phenomenon found in all families, peoples, and religious communities. There is no promise in revelation that the Holy Spirit, living in the Church, will remove all symptoms of group egotism from our midst. It is, unfortunately, possible to love the Church from the impulse of our wounded nature; it is possible to fight for the Church, to defend her, to give all one's energy to her service without supernatural inspiration. Our fervor might be a prolongation of our selfishness. We might fight for her in order to enjoy our triumph over others; we might defend her in order to revel in our own infallibility; we might labor for her glory in order to be successful and appreciated in this world. If a missionary activity or any form of the apostolate is inspired by egoistical impulses and therefore neglects the true good of souls, our witness to Christ is greatly weakened and we raise obstacles to the spread of the kingdom among men.

Morality and Witness

The moral principles we have mentioned are immediately convincing. It is curious that they have never been discussed in our moral theology. There exists no study on the moral aspects of missionary activity, of apologetics, and of the work for individual conversions. Here again the ecumenical movement leads us to a greater fidelity to the Word of God.

There need be, then, no conflict between ecumenism and conversion work, whether it is carried on by Protestants or Catholics. It is my conviction that the Catholic work for individual conversions will become more truly effective when it is deeply influenced by the ecumenism of the Church.

A priest whose theological training has been carried on in an ecumenical spirit will find it much easier to express Catholic doctrines in the language of others; he will be able to translate our traditional terms and show how they are relevant to the contemporary world. More than that, he will appreciate the good he finds in others. Too

often, the priest dedicated to convert-making presents the Catholic truth as something altogether new, having no direct link with the Christian convictions of others, instead of trying to present Catholic teaching as the fulfillment of their Christian aspirations. If a man has Christian faith, entry into the Catholic Church is not a radical break with his past (like the conversion of a nonbeliever), but a fulfillment and a completion. Too often converts are drawn into the form of Catholicism which happens to surround them, instead of being encouraged to find the kind of spirituality in the Church which is in harmony with their own background and their deep aspirations. Local customs and the ideals of one kind of piety are often presented to him as belonging to the substance of Catholicism.

The new convert is often overwhelmed by what appears to him to be, but is not, ecclesiastical authority. As a result, the unfolding of his creative and spiritual powers promised to him in the Church never really takes place. He will often simply follow the convictions that surround him, without ever having any new ideas or taking any original action himself. Because of the break that has been created in his life, before and after his conversion, because of the effort completely to revise his intellectual life, he no longer finds the right words for communicating with his family and his former friends. He becomes isolated from them, not because they reject him, but because he has been led to give up the continuity with his life before he was converted. If convert instruction were given in an ecumenical spirit, the converts would become bridges and links to their former communities. Separated Christians would be able to see the convert as one of their own, as one who has remained loyal to their Christian ideals and yet as one who has received an immensely richer treasure in the Catholic Church.

The famous converts from Protestantism may be divided into two groups. There are those who, rejecting their past completely, seek in the Catholic Church the spirituality most opposed to their old outlook. And there are others who, cherishing their past as a stage on the road to Catholic fullness, seek in the Catholic Church a spirituality in continuity with their former Christian ideals. F. W. Faber belonged to the first group, and Cardinal Newman, who never

saw eye to eye with him, to the second. The Fabers of history have harmed the ecumenical movement, the Newmans have aided it. Gertrude von Le Fort, the great German poetess, convert from Protestant Christianity, has observed that there are converts who anticipate and experience in their hearts the true reconciliation of Protestants with the Catholic Church.

After having described Catholic ecumenism in various ways and contrasted it with the apostolate for souls, we wish to define its essential features. There are many reasons why we prefer to define the Catholic ecumenical movement, not in relation to dissident Christians, but in relation to the Church herself. In this way we make clear that the movement is profoundly Catholic and distinguish it more sharply from conversion work and direct influence on dissident Christians. The ecumenical dialogue certainly influences separated Christians, but this effect is incidental. It will have this influence precisely because we do not seek it. We must characterize the Catholic striving after Christian unity in a way which makes very clear that the ecumenical movement is not a cunning technique for making converts. We shall regard Catholic ecumenism as an activity seeking to perfect the Church in one of her essential qualities. What is this quality?

Qualitative Catholicity

By the catholicity of the Church theological writers usually understand the universality of the Church in regard to place and people. The Church is sent and established as the unique community of salvation embracing all of humanity, and hence she is not bound to any particular people, to any race or country, to any cultural or social class. This radical universality belongs to the Church because of what Christ has done for her. He is the universal Savior. The missionary activity of the Catholic Church tries to translate this gift into the concrete order of history. When theologians write of the qualitative catholicity of the Church, they do not refer to her geographical extension, but to the universal character of the message of Christ and the life of the Church, which are capable of adaptation to the mentality of every people, to the genius of every culture, and the talents of any human community.

This qualitative catholicity has been greatly emphasized by the recent pontiffs in their encyclicals on the missions and in some documents on the Christian situation in Europe. In the encyclical letter of 1937, *Mit brennender Sorge*, Pius XI stated:

Under the enormous vault of the Church there is room for the development of the special qualities, talents, tasks, and vocations which God the Creator and Redeemer has bestowed on individuals and on whole nations. The maternal heart of the Church is great and wide enough to see in the development, according to God's plan, of such proper qualities and special talents, the richness of variety rather than the danger of isolation.

Pius XII, emphasizing the Church's universality, wrote in the encyclical *Summi Pontificatus*:

Those who enter the Church, whatever their origin or their speech, must know that they have equal rights in the house of the Lord where the law of Christ and the peace of Christ prevail.

This catholicity possesses a special factor dealing with the properly ecclesiastical domain. The Church's catholicity is such that she is not bound to any particular rite, a unique liturgy, a single school of theology, or any one ascetical tradition. "The Church is not Latin," Benedict XV wrote, "neither is she Greek or Slavonic, but Catholic." The Church is fully catholic or, to signify the special ecclesiastical factor of catholicity, the Church is fully *ecumenical* because she can integrate into her own life a plurality of rites, of liturgies, of theological schools, of disciplinary traditions, of ascetical practices. According to the repeated promises made by the popes to the Eastern Churches, the integration of these different values does not weaken the Church or imply compromise and inner conflict, on the contrary, they proclaim a plenitude of Christian life and a special splendor of Christ's body. We may speak of the *ecumenicity* of the Church, a note or quality within the Church's catholicity, signifying the potential plurality of ecclesiastical forms and theological traditions within the Church which bring to light the richness and universality of Christ's gift.

In his letters dealing with the Eastern Churches, Pius XI often spoke of the *ecumenical* unity of the Church. With this adjective he singled out that aspect of the

Church's catholicity by which she embraces, at least potentially, all authentic Christian traditions in the freedom of a diversified unity. This ecumenical character of ecclesiastical unity was, in the eyes of Pius XI, a visible mark authenticating the Church's message. In *Ecclesiam Dei* he wrote: "The Church of God, wonderfully established as a universal family of brethren and destined to embrace the entire human race, is recognizable in the world, with other signs, through her ecumenical unity."

Catholic Ecumenism

We therefore regard the Catholic ecumenical movement as an activity within the Church making her more ecumenical, that is, making more manifest her ecumenicity. Catholic ecumenism seeks to open the Church to the plurality of gifts promised by Christ, thus leading her away from one-sidedness in usage and the preference for one particular rite and cultural uniformity. It is clear to a Catholic that not all traditions that call themselves Christian can be integrated into the Church, but only those that are in agreement with the gospel. It is precisely the task of the ecumenical dialogue to distinguish in other Christian communities the elements that are in harmony with Catholic life and hence could be integrated, and the elements in contradiction to Catholic life, and, consequently, forever irreconcilable. The ecumenical movement renews the Church's vitality, opening new possibilities of spiritual and ecclesiastical life, adapting it to every culture and to all authentic Christian forms of expression inspired by the Holy Ghost.

This quality of ecumenicity is entirely different from what Anglicans call "comprehensiveness." Comprehensiveness is an external juxtaposition of various ecclesiastical traditions in a single body, containing elements which are not only logical contradictions, but which also reveal divergent and irreconcilable visions of the gospel. The ecumenicity of the Catholic Church, on the other hand, is the unfolding of the fullness of Christ's gift from within, as it is applied and extended to the various peoples of God's world and adapted to the different spiritual traditions of the Christian past.

On the other hand, the effectual ecumenicity of the Catholic Church cannot be taken for granted. The ecumenical ideal we have

described demands sacrifices and generosity on our part. We have to discover anew the value of diversity. Since a natural tendency of the human mind seeks to identify unity and uniformity, we are tempted to think, at least occasionally, that an increasing uniformity might more convincingly express the unity of Christ's Church. In reality, however, an excessive uniformity obscures the unity which Christ has given to his people; unity is fully catholic only when we find faith, holiness, and obedience in the freedom of our personal vocation and social tradition.

In this connection, let us listen to two Cardinals of the Catholic Church expressing their ideas and hopes for future developments. Cardinal Feltin, Archbishop of Paris, says:

It is not enough for a bishop to say that since his mission is to unite, he must employ all the forces of unity and fight all the forces of division. This is much too simple a solution, for, most of the time, the forces of division are no more than

the inevitable consequence of a diversity which is of such a value that it would be unfortunate to sacrifice it for unity.

Cardinal Alfrink, Archbishop of Utrecht, expresses himself in the same way. He says:

Obviously, the Church could never accept a pluralism of truth. Truth is one. Thus, the Church must give her all to protect the unity of revealed truth. On the other hand, she ought not to be afraid of pluralism in the practice of this unique faith. If, in a precise period, this pluralism can aid in laying bare the essential characteristics of the Church. It is licit to think that a certain uniformity hides the true unity of the Church from view, and that the very fact of a positive diversity in the practice of the faith can, on the contrary, make the nature of this unity stand out more effectively.

Catholic ecumenism is an activity in the Church which makes her more universal, more Catholic, more perfect, more true to the hidden beauty Christ bestowed on her on the day of his victory on the cross.

ECUMENISM AND THEOLOGY

The sincere appreciation of the true Christian values among Protestants will lead the ecumenist to an attitude which is quite different from that of the apologetically minded theologian. Instead of explaining Catholic doctrine with an eye to refuting Protestantism and emphasizing the very things they criticize in us, the ecumenical approach seeks to attain a greater balance of Catholic truth and show that the Christian values and insights of Protestants really belong to the Catholic Church. This may mean going back to the sources of Catholic teaching: Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, and the ancient Councils. This may mean subjecting to careful analysis some of the theological ideas which we have taken for granted for a number of centuries. This kind of ecumenical dialogue is an enormous stimulus for creative theological thinking.

GREGORY BAUM, O.S.A.

The Catholic Doctrine on Grace

P. De Letter

The growing interest of Catholics today, lay or cleric, young and old, in the doctrine of grace, particularly of sanctifying grace, is a healthy sign. It reveals the desire of many for a more enlightened and genuine living of the Christian life which is the life of grace. No wonder a number of the better Catholics are unsatisfied with the scanty teaching they received on what now and then they glimpse as an exalted and enthralling mystery, the heart of our Christian religion and life. In fact, in the minds of perhaps not a few and in the pages of some religious text books, there linger some very inadequate notions of grace.

Inadequate Notions of Grace. Grace, sanctifying grace, is not merely the absence of mortal sin, no more than the practice of the Christian life is limited to avoiding sin. This absence is only the negative side of it, all-important no doubt and all-necessary, because no co-existence is possible between grace and mortal sin. And in actual fact, we all entered and eventually re-entered into grace by being cleansed from sin, from original sin in our baptism, and from personal sin in confession. But grace says a good deal more than no-sin.

Nor is it just a state which it must be our great care to die in. It is true, our eternity is at stake in the state we die in, state of grace or state of sin; and there is no middle way. But it is also important to *live* in the state of grace. Only they who overlook the positive side of this state of supernatural health fail to see the need of living in a state of grace.

For grace is not just a ticket for heaven, like a ticket for a cinema show, it is in a real, however mysterious, way a beginning

of heaven. Nor is it merely a precious jewel, a beautiful something or a treasure which makes for the supernatural beauty of our souls. Grace undoubtedly beautifies our souls in a manner undreamed of by human fancy. But it does so less by being something beautiful in the sanctuary of our souls than by transforming and transfiguring them in a manner which revelation does not hesitate to call divinization. Souls in grace live by sharing in the divine life.

This new, perhaps unsuspected, perfection of the soul in grace (of which, we shall see presently, Holy Scripture has to say a good deal), we do not directly experience in our normal awareness: we do not feel our state of grace as a supernatural newness. At most we may experience the peace of conscience and the joy of God's friendship which are to some extent symptoms of the hidden mystery of grace. It is from faith and revelation that we know something of the riches of the mystery. And by combining, as we spontaneously do, what we know from faith with our human knowledge of the symptoms of grace (or of the absence of sin) we can and do come to that human certainty of our state of grace without which we could hardly live the life of grace.

What then is grace? To arrive at a less inadequate idea of the mysterious life that is grace, we may consider the threefold personal relationship that pertains to its very structure: grace links us with Christ, with the indwelling Trinity, and with the whole Christ.

Grace and Christ. The source of all grace is Christ, the Son of God made man for our salvation. There is no grace, as there is no salvation, except through Jesus Christ (Acts 4, 12). In the synoptic gospels this means

(Continued on page 12)

THE FOURTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DOCTRINE AND ECUMENISM

*Sponsored by the Paulist Institute for Religious Research
and the San Francisco Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.*

Sir Francis Drake Hotel, San Francisco, April 30 to May 2, 1963.

TUESDAY, APRIL 30

- 10:00 A.M. Registration opens.
- 12:00 Lunch: Rev. John J. Keating, C.S.P., Chairman
Welcome: The Most Rev. Joseph T. McGucken, D.D.
Archbishop of San Francisco
Greeting: Very Rev. William A. Michell, C.S.P.
Superior General of Paulist Fathers
Address: Rt. Rev. John T. Foudy, Ph.D.
- 2:00 P.M. General Session:
Chairman: The Most Rev. Floyd Begin, D.D.
Bishop of Oakland
Topic: Ecumenism and Conversion
Speaker: Rev. Daniel O'Hanlon, S.J. (Alma College)
- 3:30-5:00 P.M. Panel Meetings:
Group A How to Win a Hearing
Chairman: Rev. Michael J. Lucid, CCD Director, Oakland
Speakers: Rev. Ellwood Kieser, C.S.P. (Los Angeles)
Rev. Edward McLean (Hartford, Conn.)
Group B The Instruction of Inquirers
Chairman: Rev. John J. Brenkle, J.C.D., CCD Director,
Santa Rosa
Speakers: Rev. James B. Lloyd, C.S.P. (New York)
Rev. Theodore C. Stone, CCD Director, Chicago
Group C Reception and After-Care
Chairman: Rev. William C. Hughes, CCD Director, Stockton
Speakers: Rev. John T. McGinn, C.S.P. (Washington, D.C.)
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Leonard Nienaber (Lexington, Ky.)
- 8:00 P.M. General Session:
Chairman: Most Rev. Merlin J. Guilfoyle, D.D.
San Francisco, Calif.
Topic: Protestant-Catholic Dialogue
Speakers: Rev. Gustave Weigel, S.J.
Dr. Robert McAfee Brown

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

- 9:00 A.M. Registration
- 10:00 A.M. General Session:
Chairman: Mr. John Delury
Topic: Role of the Laity
Speakers: Mr. George Randol (Fresno)
Mr. Patrick Vesey (Toronto)
Judge G. E. Carlson (St. Paul, Minn.)

- 2:00-3:30 P.M. Panel Meetings (continued)
- Group A The Instruction of Inquirers
 - Group B Reception and After-Care
 - Group C How to Win a Hearing
- 4:00 P.M. Seminar for Information Center Directors
- 4:00-5:00 P.M. General Session:
- Chairman: Rev. William Greenspun, C.S.P.
CCD National Office
 - Speakers: Representatives of various lay groups
- 8:00 P.M. General Session:
- Chairman: To Be Announced
 - Topic: The Ecumenical Movement
and Christian Renewal
 - Speaker: Rev. Thomas Stransky, C.S.P. (Rome)

THURSDAY, MAY 2

- 10:00 A.M. General Session:
- Topic I: The Liturgy and Unity
 - Speaker: Rev. Frank Norris, S.S. (San Francisco)
 - Topic II: Scripture and Unity
 - Speaker: Rev. John Huesman, S.J. (Alma College)
- 2:00-3:00 P.M. Panel Meetings (continued)
- Group A Reception and After-Care
 - Group B How to Win a Hearing
 - Group C Instruction of Inquirers
- 4:00 P.M. Seminar for Information Center Directors
- 4:00-5:00 P.M. General Session:
- Chairman: Rev. William Greenspun, C.S.P.
 - Topic: Integration and Cooperation of Lay Groups
in a Parish Plan
 - Speakers: Representatives of different groups
- 6:00 P.M. Dialogue Mass

Single Registrations \$10.00

Parish Registrations \$25.00

A parish registration is good for three persons. E.G., a priest and two laymen. It may be used at different times by different people from the same parish.

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443 Church St., San Francisco 14, Calif.

that we must enter the kingdom of God which Christ came to preach, and do so by repenting of our sins and by following Christ or living by his teaching (Mat. 4, 17; 5-6). St. John, the theologian of life eternal, shows in the Word made flesh the giver of the power to become sons of God; "We have all received something out of his abundance; . . . through Jesus Christ grace came to us" (John, 1, 14, 16, 17). And St. Paul, the theologian of saving grace, contrasts the grace of Christ with the sin of the first Adam: just as guilt and death came to all through Adam, so from Christ come life and grace (Rom. 5, 12ff). Christ came that we may have life and have it abundantly (John 10, 10). For that reason the good shepherd lay down his life for us (John 10, 11; cf. 1 John 4, 9). And St. Peter says that Christ died on the cross for us and for our sins, so "we were to become dead to our sins, and live in holiness" (1 Pet. 2, 24). From Christ therefore comes forgiveness of sin and new life.

Life in Christ

This origin of our life of grace explains why our grace is a sharing in the grace of Christ: the life of grace in us is in a way the same as in Christ himself. Baptism is the door to the life of grace, and as St. Paul explains, its symbolism, the immersion into the water and emersion from it, shows that it unites us with the death of Christ and his resurrection; and so in baptism we die to sin and rise to a new life (Rom. 6, 4). And the parables of the vine and the branches (which, with the Council of Trent, we may extend to all the just, though in St. John it applies properly to the Apostles) and of the head and the members definitely teach that by grace we are incorporated into Christ and live by his life. The branches live by the life of the vine as long as they remain on the vine, so do we live by the life of Christ as long as we live on in him (John 15, 1ff). We are the members of Christ and draw our life from him and from his Spirit (1 Cor. 12, 27; Eph. 4, 15; 5, 30; later development will state that he infuses his life in us as the head sends life into the members of a body). And to be a member of Christ means to live 'in Christ' (2 Cor. 5, 17, 21f; cf. Gal. 3, 26-28; Rom. 6, 3-5) and with Christ (cf. Rom. 6, 1-11). He it is who lives in us (cf. Gal. 2, 20). So the life of

grace is the life of Christ in us. As St. Cyril of Alexandria said, What was in Christ derives into us; and St. Augustine, The grace that sanctified the humanity of Christ is the one that makes us Christians. And theologians with St. Thomas Aquinas further explain: our life of grace is a sharing in the sanctifying grace of Christ; he as the head of mankind imparts to us his members to live by his own life, as it were by the overflow of his grace. No wonder then the Christian life is imitation of Christ: we have only to live as he did to live in keeping with grace.

Dependence on Christ

Thus incorporated into Christ we are in permanent contact with him. Our relationship with Christ through grace is one of uninterrupted dependence. All the time do the branches draw life from the vine and the members receive from the head the inflow of life. This contact with Christ, however, is no matter of feeling or fancy: it is a fact known by faith. And we know that it depends on our free decision whether the inflow of life from Christ to us will go on: whether we remain on in the vine and in Christ's love (John 15, 9f). This shows our relationship with Christ as one from person to Person. And we should beware of fancying grace as a sort of spiritual vital fluid—the sap of the vine—that 'flows' from him into us. The grace by which we live the life of Christ is the radiation of his divine personality into the persons who come in touch with him as members of his body. Just as a strong human personality exerts a moulding influence on those who live in steady contact with him, so also, but on a higher and more real level, our personal relationship with Christ through grace transforms us into his members; it makes us one with him and like unto him. In this regard, sanctifying grace is nothing but the real link of our relationship and transforming union with Christ. Rightly therefore do we say that Christ is the heart and centre of the Christian life.

Grace and the indwelling Trinity. Our personal relationship with Christ, for all its grandeur, is but the entrance into the mystery of grace. Christ is the way to the Father (John 14, 8), he it is who sends and in whose name the Father sends the Paraclete (John 15, 7; 14, 16). Grace being a link

with Christ, it cannot but be a link with the indwelling Trinity (John 14, 23, 26). We cannot be in personal contact with the second Person of the Blessed Trinity without as it were meeting the Father and the Holy Spirit. Grace thus is a link with the Triune God of the Christian revelation.

A first new facet of grace revealed here, perhaps the most important in all that God has deigned to reveal of the mystery of his love for man, is this: created grace is but a link with Uncreated Grace. The heart of the mystery is God's self-gift to man realized in the divine indwelling. The Triune God, for all his eternal bliss, delights to dwell with the children of men (cf. Prov. 8, 31). And it is sanctifying grace that unites us to the Uncreated Self-gift: Father, Son and Spirit. Or rather inversely, first in importance and in transforming power is the divine indwelling. The indwelling Trinity transforms the soul in grace, and this transformation or newness is what we call sanctifying or created grace.

And this self-gift of the Triune God, the Fathers of the Church boldly say, "divinizes" us. Not in the sense that we become God and lose our own being and personality. No, we are in no way absorbed in God, we are raised to a divine level: divinization means union and likeness with the Triune God. Only God, Uncreated Grace, can so divinize us in both our person and our nature.

Sons of God

By grace we are in name and in fact sons of God (1 John 3, 1), born from God (John 1, 14) by a regeneration which St. Paul qualifies as 'making sons': the Spirit of sonship makes us sons of God and makes us cry out Abba Father (Rom. 8, 14f; cf. Gal. 4, 5). Sonship is a relation of person to person, of son to father. Divine sonship means our personal relationship to God as Father, that is, to the First Person of the Blessed Trinity. And Christ who is the only-begotten Son of the Father by nature, is the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8, 29). The Spirit of the Father and the Son becomes our guiding and vivifying Spirit and we his temple (cf. Rom. 8, 15, cf. 9 and 11). Thus we as it were enter into God's household (cf. Eph. 2, 19). This (adoptive) divine sonship expresses the divinization of our person.

By grace we are made to share in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1, 4). Our rebirth from God and our divine sonship somehow entail this necessity. We are made to share the divine life, the bliss and knowledge and love of which faith and hope and charity already now give us some anticipation, awaiting the day that we shall see God face to face (cf. 1 Cor. 13, 12f). This God-given power of knowing and loving him as he is, which is the dynamic sharing in the divine life rooted in sanctifying grace, manifests the divinization of our nature.

A Personal Relationship

And thus we may say, with St. Paul and St. John, that by grace we enter into a real personal relationship with the indwelling divine Persons. Grace is 'trinitarian' in reality and not only by way of speaking: it really places us face to face, though in the dim light of faith, with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is a link of personal relationship with God; and God is not one Person but three—three Persons in one nature who, through their one common nature 'effect' in perfect unison whatever is 'created' in our grace and adoption and divinization. But as grace is the real link of our personal relationship with God as Persons or as Three, it cannot but be trinitarian: it is of necessity the link of a triune relationship to the indwelling Trinity.

The divine indwelling by grace, let it be stressed here also, is a fact known by faith, it is not normally the object of our direct experience. We believe because Christ revealed it. And it was revealed that we should live by it: live as sons of the Father, united with Christ our Saviour and Brother, and docile to the guiding Spirit.

All this is a stammering effort at putting into words the vertical dimension of grace. There still remains the horizontal dimension, our mutual union and relationship with one another as members of Christ.

Grace and the Whole Christ. Grace makes us members of Christ, that is, members of his body which is the Church (Col. 1, 24; cf. Eph. 5, 30). This means, in the mind of St. Paul, members of the person of Christ that is the Church. The unity of this body or person of which Christ himself is the head (Eph. 5, 25), is given by the Spirit of Christ (Eph. 4, 3f). The diversity of functions among the members serves unto

the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4, 11-13). And it serves the good of each and all of the members, for we are all members one of another (Eph. 4, 25). The work and the good health of each member serve the good of the body and of each and all of the members (1 Cor. 12, 14-26): "And you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (ib. 27).

Grace then makes us members of the Church and members of one another. It not only links us with Christ and in Christ with the Triune God, it also links us with one another as members of one body whose unity is from the Spirit of Christ. St. Paul, it is true, did not view our incorporation into the Church in exactly the same way as we generally do today: for him the Church is the 'person' of Christ—body in the Semitic sense standing for the whole person—and its unity comes from the vivifying Spirit of Christ. Today we rather see the Church as the body of Christ and the Spirit as her soul or principle of life and unity. But in both the Semitic and Greek approaches, grace makes us members of the Church of which Christ is the head, and members one of another.

Grace then links us invisibly but really, that is, mystically, with one another. Grace of Christians is grace of members. It unites us all together in the Church that is Christ's body. Grace is 'ecclesial'. Again, this hidden reality of grace is revealed to us by our faith; it is there whatever we may or may

not feel about it. No wonder then charity or mutual love is the mark of the members of Christ (1 Cor. 13) and Christ's own and new commandment (John 13, 34). No wonder the members of the Church receive gifts of the Spirit, various for their various functions, but all for the common good (cf. 1 Cor. 12, 7) of the Church and all the members. A sense of the Church should be natural to all her members, one built on faith and conviction and not on feeling and fancy. In this regard, then, the life of grace appears as the supernatural link that binds together all members of Christ's body and makes them live one for another and all for all.

Conclusion. The above considerations should have shown how in the perspective of our personal relationship with Christ, with the indwelling Trinity, and with one another in the Church, the Catholic doctrine of grace allows us a glimpse, however fleeting and partial, at the unsoundable riches of the mystery. Here it appears that sanctifying grace is not only a created gift of God that beautifies our souls and makes us holy. It also and above all links us mysteriously with Christ and in him with the Blessed Trinity and with the whole Christ. And God's self-gift to us in Christ in turn calls our self-gift to God and men in Christ. Thus the mystery of grace is the mystery of divine love that appeared when "God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we may live by him" (1 John 4, 9).

Uncreated Grace

What distinguishes the order of grace from the order of nature? It is that God gives us, not merely his created gifts, however wonderful these may be, but also himself. Grace is first and foremost the self-gift of God. In a mysterious way, God communicates his own reality to us. We enter into the possession of God. We are joined to God as he is in himself, and this union with God, by which he is in us as our own, is the primary feature of the state of grace. We call it the indwelling of the Trinity or, less frequently, uncreated grace.

CHARLES DAVIS

READING I'VE LIKED

Father Hans Küng, ordained in 1955, has already attained an eminent position among Catholic theologians. His numerous articles, his study on Karl Barth, and his volume on *The Council, Reform and Reunion* have won him a wide audience. In *That The World May Believe* (Sheed and Ward, \$3.00) he writes more informally but with the same refreshing candor a series of letters to a Catholic student on some problems that confront all Catholics. Hints for discussions on religion, treating the defects of Catholics, Liturgy, Re-union, Salvation Outside the Church, Superstition, Religious Doubts—are some of the highly relevant topics on which he speaks wisely and with priestly understanding.

Every activity in the Catholic Church has been enriched by the Catholic revival of recent years. In *Preaching*, edited by Father Ronan Drury who teaches Elocution at Maynooth, (Sheed and Ward, \$3.50) we have one of the best books on the subject to appear in English in recent years. Eight of the writers are noted Irish priests who discuss various aspects of Catholic preaching: Preaching and the Liturgy; Mission Preaching; The Sunday Sermon, etc. The first chapter is by the distinguished English theologian Father Charles Davis entitled *The Theology of Preaching*. This particular paper is an outstanding contribution to the subject which should be required reading by priests and seminaries throughout the English speaking world.

Notable among the many gatherings of priests for brief summer courses in studies that bear on pastoral problems is the Mid-western Institute of Pastoral Theology, Detroit. The first annual Institute was held in August, 1961, and was concerned with Religious Education. The second and equally successful Institute was held in August, 1962 and the subject was Pastoral Counselling. The Proceedings for last year's Institute are now available and deserve a wide distribution. Talks by authorities like Father Freighe, O.F.M., Doctors Odenwald, Cavanagh and others get to the heart of a topic of surpassing pastoral importance. *Pastoral Counselling*, Proceedings of the Second Annual Institute, Sacred Heart Seminary, 2701 West Chicago Blvd., Detroit 6, Mich. \$1.25.

Ancient Israel: It's Life and Institutions,

by R. de Vaux, O.P., is now available in a single volume in English (McGraw-Hill Book Company, \$10.95). It is sufficient to say that this book by the General Editor of the Bible de Jerusalem is generally regarded by biblical scholars as the best on the subject that is likely to appear for many years to come. Dr. William Albright refers to it as "without a peer in its field."

Alert readers have come to respect the work of Peter Fransen, S.J., for occasional articles on theological subjects translated from the Dutch. In *Divine Grace and Man* (Desclee Co. \$2.25) he makes available the gist of lectures to lay people on aspects of grace which concern them most intimately. In short chapters and in an idiom which the layman will find understandable he throws immense light on a difficult topic.

GUIDE

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GUIDE

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Guide Lights

ECUMENICAL HOPE . . .

The religious atmosphere has undergone a profound change in the last several years. Day by day there is growing evidence of a new friendliness among those of different denominations. In particular the press takes note of Catholic-Protestant rapprochements. All this has given increasing status and dignity to the ecumenical movement, and one is likely to meet enthusiastic ecumenists today, who yesterday could not pronounce the word. This is not said in way of reproach; nevertheless, it seems fitting in the midst of so much enthusiasm to suggest some picture of the true ecumenist, so that he might be distinguished from the dilettante and the opportunist.

In the first place, the true ecumenist is characterized by hope. For he is certainly one seeing "through a glass in an obscure manner." He cannot discover the goal of his ecumenical endeavor under any specific arch in the corridor of time which extends beyond the limit of his vision. He can only idealize the dimensions of Christian unity and hope that in the unforeseeable future, beyond the convergence of the corridor walls, the separate denominations will find their way to oneness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

What kind of hope is this? Is it a concept quartered in the speculative intellect to be drawn upon on the public platform or encased in the printed word for psychic income or monetary remuneration? Or is it something which envelops the whole man, something enkindled by distress at disunity? Does it have a simple existence undisturbed by other emotions? Or does it coexist with grief as a flickering light that helps to relieve the felt darkness of a divided Christendom?

It would seem that to have hope for the future, we must be troubled in the present. And a would-be ecumenist should ask himself how troubled he is. He should be able to find in himself some measure of that sadness implicit in the soul of Christ when He prayed that "all might be one." For, even as He played, He knew the divisions that were to come.

ECUMENICAL CHARITY

And while he hopes with all his mind,

and heart, and soul, the ecumenist must exercise a constant charity. It must be a true charity, not that reasonable facsimile generated for special occasions and public consumption. It is not charity to be overly irenic or passingly genial. Nor can a priest measure his charity by the number of ministers with whom he is on a first name basis.

We do not for a moment expect the perfection of charity in any ordinary person in this mortal life. For the perfection of charity is expressed in the words of Christ when He says that we must love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. The fulfillment of this precept is the work of a lifetime. And its difficulty was pointed out by St. Francis de Sales when he said that no man would be perfect until he was dead fifteen minutes. Yet, there should be some sign that one is not only conscious of the precept, but is also trying to measure up to it.

Now, if one is trying, he cannot arbitrarily define his neighbor. He cannot construct a favored group for his amor benevolentiae. To return to the ecumenist, it should be a thing of wonder if he professes love for all those who stand apart in other denominations, and manifests little regard for those who are members of his own Faith. It should be surprising if he has unending patience with those who disagree with him on fundamental theological positions, and has only irritation for those of his own religious persuasion who do not share all of his own ideas. It should be a thing of shame if among others he speaks disparagingly of his own while emulating a contortionist in speaking well of those who are not his own.

It may be that many of his coreligionists are a crass lot and difficult to instruct in better ways. Yet, can they be more obdurate in what he considers their errors than those who hold an alien theology? And should he not strive to understand his united brethren with the same spirit he evinces towards those who are separated?

THE POLEMICIST . . .

These two virtues, hope and charity, should be basic points for an honest examination of conscience, a probing of motives. For the true ecumenical spirit has its well-

springs not in a simple regret but in a kind of anguish that Christians are not indeed one fold with one shepherd. And this anguish generates hope and fosters charity. For it would be a sterile hope, a suspect virtue that was raised on the ruins of charity.

This was the mistake of so many polemicists who fought fire with fire and contributed to an increasing inferno of hostility and misunderstanding. When religious revolutions seemed to threaten the life of the Church, the polemicist was born. The witnesses of the Faith were replaced by defenders. And too often defenders felt that in order to show their rightness they had to expose the wrongness of all others.

They were not without a principle of charity, the principle that one must hate error but love those who are in error. Yet, the polemical practice of over-simplification coupled with a legal tendency to discredit the testimony of others by impugning their moral worth, lead to breaches of charity and sometimes bordered on dishonesty. It would be difficult, for example, to find a kindly and judicious presentation of the Reformers in "a post-Reformation apologist."

Yet, we cannot be too free with condemnations. The passage of time has provided vantage points which were not easily secured in the midst of charges and counter-charges. When both sides were burning heretics, charity was a difficult virtue. It is easier now, when we find ourselves under common pressures, to achieve tolerance and to seek understanding.

THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER . . .

There are two further points upon which the aspiring ecumenist should meditate. One is prayer; the other is mission-mindedness. The former is a natural corollary of hope and charity. The latter is evoked by a distress larger in its object than separated Christians. Here the object is all humanity still separated from Christ.

On the point of prayer: every true ecumenist acknowledges that we cannot achieve unity by merely human means. All are agreed that if and when it comes, it will be the work of God. This reflection produces the imperative of prayer. And it does not make a man an ecumenist because he can talk glibly about it. There is more of an ecumenical spirit in one who does not talk at all, but who prays fervently, than there is in one who makes a rational assent, publicly urges it and even goes through public gestures, but who seldom if ever pours out his private heart before the throne of God.

The would-be ecumenist might ask himself: What are my thoughts in my quiet moments before the tabernacle? When I think of other Christians, am I largely constructing plans for more human activity? Am I immersed in the natural machinery of ecumenism? Is there a flavor of Pelagianism in my outlook? Or do I reflect upon the role of God and experience a feeling of humility for my own small part?

The would-be ecumenist might ask himself: What are my prayers whether public or private? Do they beseech God with fervor to grant that unity which is beyond the contrivance of man? Or are they formal petitions arising from notional assent, but not from total involvement.

MISSION-MINDEDNESS . . .

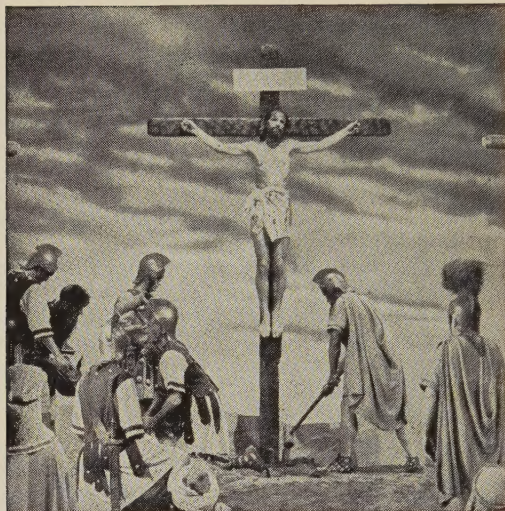
The true ecumenist will also understand the limits of the ecumenical movement on the one hand, and the extent of God's mercy on the other. He will realize that ecumenism is concerned with Christians, and primarily with committed Christians; whereas God is concerned with all mankind. As St. Paul says, "(God) wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth."

Understanding this, the ecumenist will not be untroubled by the multitude which is not Christian. Nor will he be untroubled by those nominal Christians who are largely unaffected by ecumenical activity. While it is not required of him that he actively engage in missionary work, it should be expected that he would have interest in it and sympathy and encouragement for it.

CONFERENCE ON DOCTRINE AND ECUMENISM . . .

It was because of the new meaning beginning to attach itself to convert work that it was decided to change the name of the National Conference on Convert Work to the Conference on Doctrine and Ecumenism. This conference will be held in San Francisco starting on the last day of April and extending for three days. It is sponsored by the Paulist Institute and the San Francisco Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. It will explore the relationship of ecumenism and instruction in Catholic teaching and present methods in instruction work which take into account the dimension of ecumenism. The priests who are preparing the conference are keenly alive both to the implications of ecumenism and to the mandate of Christ to preach the gospel to every creature.

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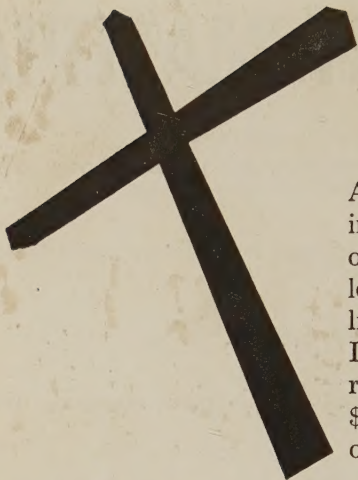
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